

# The crucial difference between contact management and CRM

The budget cuts and spending freezes resulting from the current economic downturn have reduced the number of legitimate opportunities for sales representatives; therefore, organisations are placing a renewed emphasis on cutting costs and customer retention to combat certain economic realities.

By [Andrew Boyd and Alex Jefferies](#) 2 Feb 2009

In an ongoing attempt to meet the expectations of prospects and improve the lifetime value of current customers, businesses are examining ways of unifying fragmented customer data and making this customer and account information available to the organisation at large. Contact management (CM) solutions and customer relationship management (CRM) solutions are two primary technology enablers allowing organisations to gain better control of their information assets and processes.

CM solutions are productivity and sales automation tools designed to allow individuals or teams to manage contacts, opportunities, or account information more efficiently. CRM solutions, on the other hand, are process-centric, multi-module solutions that serve as a system of record for all customer interactions. Varying definitions and the lack of a standard definition between CM and CRM solutions have some organisations pondering which is a better fit for their business and why.

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